The Optimism of Absence: An Archaeology of Displacement, Effacement, and Modernity

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In the 1960s Edward J. Zebrowski turned the razing of Indianapolis, Indiana into a compelling show of forward-looking community optimism illuminating the power of displacement. When Zebrowski's company toppled the Knights of Pythias Hall in 1967, for instance, he installed bleachers and hired an organist to play from the back of a truck as the 12-story Romanesque Revival structure was reduced to rubble. Two years later, the 'Big Z' hosted a party in the Claypool Hotel and ushered guests outside at midnight to watch as the floodlit building met its end at the wrecking ball.

FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

Zebrowski's theatricality perhaps distinguished him from the scores of wrecking balls dismantling American cities, but his celebration of the city's material transformation mirrored the sentiments of many urbanites in the wake of World War II. The postwar period was punctuated by a flurry of destruction and idealistic redevelopment in American cities like Indianapolis just as the international landscape was being rebuilt from the ruins of the war. In 1959, the *New York Times'* Austin Wehrwein (1959: 61) assessed the University of Chicago's massive displacement in Hyde Park and drew a prescient parallel to postwar Europe when he indicated that 'wrecking crews have cleared large tracts, so that areas near the university resemble German cities just after World War II.' Indeed, much of Europe was distinguished less by ruins and redevelopment than demolition and emptied landscapes removing the traces of warfare that states wished to reclaim or efface; in the United States, urban renewal likewise took aim on impractical, unappealing, or otherwise unpleasant urban fabric and the people who called such places home.

These global projects removed wartime debris and razed deteriorating pre-war landscapes, extending interwar urban renewal projects that embraced the fantasy of a `blank

slate' as they built various unevenly executed imaginations of modernity. However, many optimistic development plans in Europe and the United States alike were abandoned or disintegrated into ruins themselves, simply leaving blank spaces on the landscape. Consequently, the legacy of urban renewal and postwar reconstruction is not simply modernist architecture; instead, postwar landscape transformation is signaled by distinctive absences dispersed amidst postwar architectural space and traces of earlier built environments.

Few architectural forms provide more compelling testimony to urban renewal ambitions than the fate of public housing communities like Detroit's Brewster-Douglass (see Ryzewski, this volume). Eleanor Roosevelt hosted a demolition ceremony for the Brewster Homes slum clearance project in September 1935 at which she celebrated the razing of the neighbourhood's existing homes (*New York Times* 1935, 23; Kinney 2011, 41; Martelle 2012, 133). In an optimistic moment of theater Edward Zebrowski would appreciate, the First Lady ceremoniously waved a handkerchief, and a truck attached to a derelict house by a cable lumbered forward, pulling down the house with `a roar of splintering timbers and falling bricks. Mortar dust was showered over speakers and 20,000 spectators' (*New York Times* 1935: 23; Martelle 2012: 133). In 1938, 701 African-American families moved into the first Brewster Homes (Kinney 2011: 41; Thomas 2013: 21), and expansion included six 14-story Frederick Douglass Apartment towers completed in 1952. Brewster-Douglass was astounding for its ambitious scale, housing between 8000 and 10,000 residents at its peak, and the prominent high-rises were impossible to ignore, covering five-by-three city blocks looming over the heart of the city.

FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

Brewster-Douglass is among the modernist redevelopments that are now going under the wrecking ball in contemporary moments of optimistic destruction that are ironically much like those once orchestrated by Eleanor Roosevelt, Edward Zebrowski, and many more community planners and residents. Brewster-Douglass' decline was driven by familiar issues that dogged nearly all American public housing projects: racist housing policies by the Detroit

Housing Commission perpetuated broader material marginalisation (Kinney 2011); indifferent maintenance hastened physical erosion; and a new interstate sliced alongside Brewster-Douglass in 1963-1968, displacing much of the African-American community in the heart of Detroit. The last Brewster-Douglass residents moved out in 2008, and in 2014 Mayor Mike Duggan convened a news conference as the towers were theatrically demolished behind him. Near the spot where Eleanor Roosevelt had once proclaimed that `you must all rejoice today that this great work has begun,' Duggan delivered Brewster-Douglass' death rites and pronounced that `We are not demolishing for the sake of demolishing. We are demolishing for the purpose of rebuilding' (Guillen 2010). As Detroit contemplates how to use the newly created expanse, Brewster-Douglass is at least temporarily another empty lot dotting the reimagined postwar landscape, testimony to the cycles of destruction, absence, and reconstruction that characterize 20th century space (cf. Millington 2010).

Alfredo González-Ruibal (2008) argues that transformation involving material destruction if not human displacement may be among the most distinctive characteristics of postwar society. Marc Augé (1995) coined the notion of 'supermodernity' to describe what he saw as the intensification and exaggeration of 20th century modernity, and González-Ruibal champions an archaeology of supermodernity that examines the extraordinary scale of landscape transformation leading up to and following World War II. Landscape absences like the footprint of Brewster-Douglass are key if somewhat overlooked evidence of extraordinarily widespread destructive processes that González-Ruibal paints as the landscape of supermodernity (see Graff, this volume, for discussion of contemporary Chicago).

Much of the archaeological ambition of a study of contemporary absences is to illuminate apparently banal spaces that pass without reflection in everyday life (cf. Bille et al 2010; Buchli and Lucas 2001; Hetherington 2003, 2004; Lucas 2010). Such a scholarship should confront why specific landscapes are now voids; illuminate how such absences lurk near the surface or just below awareness; and spark a material imagination that reveals contextually specific processes of destruction and reconstruction that have shaped much of the world since World War II. That mission borrows from González-Ruibal's picture of a consciously politicized

contemporary archaeology that focuses on spaces that are `beyond social remembrance, where memory is erased.'

This paper focuses on 20th-century absences in two communities and examines the ways local heritage has been shaped by postwar landscape transformation. In northern Finland, much of the World War II landscape has been uprooted, decayed, or replaced by postwar architecture. Between 1941 and 1944 the Finns and Germans were co-belligerents at war with the Soviets, and the German military transformed much of the landscape in northern Finland. Finns have an exceptionally rich public memory of the war (Kivimäki 2012a, 2012b), and traces of the German presence can be found in ruins or razed spaces scattered throughout northern Finland. Nevertheless, the contemporary Finnish landscape provides few preserved or commemorative spaces to materially illuminate the Finnish wartime experience. In Indianapolis, Indiana much of the city was transformed by urban renewal projects like those that produced Brewster-Douglass. Many of the Indianapolis projects expressly targeted and displaced historically African-American neighbourhoods. Much of that community space is today occupied by the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI), and there are very few traces of that African-American neighbourhood visible on the contemporary landscape.

Landscape absences and the material traces such spaces harbour provide potentially compelling places to illuminate, interrogate, and acknowledge contested dimensions of the very recent past. The absences and crumbling remains left by warfare, urban engineering, and economic and industrial collapse provide telling evidence of global destructive processes and many optimistic imaginations of a reconstructed postwar world that has itself eroded into ruins (see McAtackney, this volume, for discussion of this process in Belfast). A fixation on narrowly defined material culture and built landscapes hazards ignoring the consequence of these voids that narrate myriad failed efforts to rebuild the postwar world. Absences may demand somewhat distinctive interpretive gaze and material imagination, but they can provide especially compelling spaces to interpret the fascinating and often-unsettling international mission to reconstruct the postwar world.

Collective Memory and Materiality in Postwar Finland

On June 10, 1941 the first German Operation Barbarossa troops arrived in a series of communities along Finland's Bothnian Gulf, and the town of Oulu became home to the largest Waffen-SS encampments in northern Finland. Military bases, hospitals, and training areas for troops (as well as prison camps) were located in and around Oulu between June 1941 and September 1944, the period that Finns refer to as the Continuation War. As the Nazis' `co-belligerents' the Finns and Germans shared a common Soviet enemy, a complicated military coalition that Finns argue was neither a formal political alliance nor an occupation (Silvennoinen 2013). Finland remained a parliamentary democracy throughout the war, and Finns often view the Continuation War and the German partnership as logical extensions of the November 1939-March 1940 `Winter War,' the Soviet invasion of Finland that left Finland wary despite a 1940 treaty (Kivimäki 2012a, 492). During the Continuation War the roughly 220,000 Germans based in northern Finland built garrison and supply bases on the outskirts of northern towns like Oulu, Tornio, and Kemi and in the city centre of Rovaniemi (Ylimaunu et al 2013). Such bases were sometimes referred to as 'Little Berlins': roughly 10,000 Finns worked on Nazi construction projects, Soviet prisoners expanded community and regional infrastructure, Germans paid rent to Finnish residents, and the Germans and Finns often built close personal relationships. Finland was perhaps pro-German in terms of common military interests, but it was cool to Nazi ideology, and Finns sometimes uneasily distinguish between Germans in Finland and Nazis linked to genocide elsewhere (Holmila 2009, 2012; Vehviläinen 1987). That Finnish memory of the Germans runs directly counter to the predominant historical picture of the Nazis; Finnish public memory of German soldiers is often neutral and in many cases quite positive and personally warm (Kivimäki 2012a, 492).

In September, 1944 the Moscow Armistice between the Soviet Union and Finland ended the Continuation War. The Finns turned against the Germans in the final phase of World War II, which is referred to in Finland as the Lapland War. During the Lapland War the retreating Germans destroyed many camps and bases, leaving relatively little standing architecture from roughly 100 small prison camps and a network of military posts. Rovaniemi was almost entirely laid waste by fires in the wake of the German retreat, and images of Rovaniemi reduced to a

scatter of standing chimneys and ash have often been used to symbolize the destructiveness of the Germans' scorched earth withdrawal. During their bitter retreat to Norway the Germans burnt about 16,000 buildings, killed tens of thousands of heads of livestock, and placed over 130,000 land mines in their wake (Seitsonen and Herva 2011, 177).

FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE

Much of the wartime landscape of military support structures was used at least temporarily after the war, but most of it is now gone. Where new housing and development did not remove the German landscape, the thick forest reclaimed the more ephemeral features like trenches, firing ranges, and foundations. The gradual removal of wartime material features in Oulu was not an especially strategic effort to expunge the war from collective memory, and in fact the war is perhaps the most widely commemorated national event in Finnish heritage (Aunesluoma 2013). Much of Oulu's German military architecture was modest buildings that fell into disuse and were eventually razed without any contemplation of commemorating the prosaic material evidence of the wartime experience. Despite the loss of wartime German architecture, Oulu's modest population density and the Finnish favour for spatially dispersed settlement has ensured that much of the city's wartime fabric survives as modest traces and ruins in the community's open and wooded space, even though it is not clearly commemorated on the landscape.

Unlike well-studied monumental Third Reich architecture, the Finnish support centres planted an idiosyncratic range of material designs on the Nordic landscape. These landscapes were shaped by a complex confluence of functional provisioning needs (German support materials were imported), military regimentation, and concrete environmental conditions that required the Germans to adapt to places like Oulu and Lapland. A few pieces of distinctive National Socialist architecture were erected in northern Finland, and much of the German installation outside Oulu was a systematically planned military landscape. Nevertheless, the majority of the German landscape was informally planned, and it was dominated by relatively insubstantial spaces and structures designed for specific functional purposes (e.g., barracks,

harbors, prison camps, garages, etc). Oula Seitsonin and Vesa-Pekka Herva's (2011) archaeological fieldwork at the Peltojoki camp in Lapland has likewise revealed that the roughly 30,000 Soviet prisoners building roads and supplying bases were housed in a series of very small camps like Peltojoki composed of very modest frame or sod structures in hastily erected spaces.

Well-preserved wartime debris remains scattered throughout much of Lapland, but many of the prison camps and posts were insubstantial turf or frame structures that have long ago eroded from visibility. The absence of much disturbance has left material like vehicles, cans, and ceramics still relatively well-preserved on the surface since 1944. However, metal salvaging and efforts to provide a pristine environment for ecotourism threaten to remove much of that refuse from the contemporary surface (e.g., one prominent programme calls itself `Keep Lapland Tidy').

In the aftermath of the war Finland quite assertively turned to rebuilding its national landscape and redeveloping spaces like the German military tracts in Oulu. Finland has an exceptionally rich history of 20th century municipal planning responding to a series of crises in the country's first decades of Independence. The Finnish planning tradition was born after a brutal four-month Civil War in 1918 in which 37,000 Finns died just months after the nation declared independence in December, 1917 (Kivimäki 2012a: 483). In the wake of the war, Finnish architects and municipal planners secured significant sway over the shape of Finnish communities. Architects invoked rural values reflected in predominately low-density, single-family settlements assertively placed in the midst of green spaces (Salmela 2007). Many of these ideals were not especially cost-effective or practical in Finland's urban centres after World War II, though, when over 400,000 wartime immigrants and veterans settled in Finnish towns. Much of the nation's postwar attention focused on planning suburbs, including designed landscapes in places like Helsinki and Oulu as well as more rapidly constructed veteran's housing (Lahti 2008: 152; Soikkeli et al 2008).

The Finnish architects Otto-Iivari Meurman and Aarne Ervi collaborated on the postwar master plan and reconstruction of Oulu. The heart of their reconstruction plan was completed in 1952, but much of the German installation in Alppila, the port of Toppila, and the northern

Linnanmaa suburb remained largely undeveloped until the 1960s and later. After the war the Alppila neighbourhood's German structures were used by the Finnish Army for storage; some barracks housed soldiers and their families until the deteriorating structures were vacated in 1954 (Ylimaunu et al 2013: 253). Across from the Toppila harbor in Hietasaari 18 of the German barracks continued in use as housing into the 1970s. Over roughly 25 years most of the structures erected by the Germans deteriorated and were razed without any particularly clear strategy to remove the material traces of the German period, and there is no evidence that removing this home front wartime landscape was viewed as an effacement of an admittedly conflicted heritage. The removal of wartime structures coincided with the development of suburban Oulu, and those communities generally followed the Finnish favour for dispersed, architecturally homogenous neighbourhoods with green space. Much of that green space was occupied or rapidly reclaimed by Finnish forest, so the archaeological footprint for many German features (e.g., training trenches) is still visible in the woods around the former base, though there is no systematic survey of those features or a preservation plan.

Two particularly distinctive material remains of the Continuation War depart from the apparent absence of wartime material features. Perhaps the most distinctive German building that remains on the landscape is the Waffen SS officers club, a gable-roofed structure that loosely evokes timbered Alpine architecture (cf. Taylor 1974, 12). National Socialist landscapes have been routinely examined as mechanisms of nationalist ideology in Germany itself, but the German architecture in northern Finland reflects no concerted effort to incorporate their Finnish hosts. Built in 1942, the officer's club was one of the few distinctive structures in the German military complex, a neighbourhood now known as Alppila in reference to the Alpine style lodge. The officer's club reproduced the alpine chalet folk styles that were used in the construction of Hitler Youth hostels, with one hostel very similar to the Oulu officer's club constructed in 1936 in southern Bavaria (Lane 1968: 198). A series of such countryside hostels invoking various rural traditions were constructed throughout Germany in a host of folk styles, including 'Bavarian farm houses, Black Forest chalets, Frankish half-timbered houses, lower Saxon homes, or Prussian country seats' (Taylor 1974: 241).

After the war the Oulu officer's club was used first by the Finnish army before successively becoming home to the Society of Karelians (composed of Finns who were displaced when Finnish Karelia was ceded to the Soviet Union after the Winter War), a youth hostel, and until 2013 a fire station. Today, its future remains undetermined as Oulu contemplates how to use the former officers club. Placed on one of the few high points on the flat suburban Oulu terrain, the officers club overlooked a host of German military support structures that no longer survive. In the wooded areas to the north of the Alppila club the German military practiced on a firing range and trained in trench construction under the supervision of their Finnish hosts, but only a streetscape dotted with a variety of small industrial enterprises survives today. No markers identify the origins of the officer's club or commemorate the German military base.

Much of postwar Europe was subject to a rapid wave of commemoration of battlefields and holocaust landscapes, but Finland erected a more modest host of material monuments to the war. Home fronts like Oulu enjoyed a relatively settled life in comparison to the terror of the battle front; of about 96,000 Finns who died between 1939 and 1945, less than 2500 were civilian casualties (Kivimäke 2012, 484; Kivimäke and Tepora 2012). With such a clear distinction between battlefield and home front, the everyday material impression of the German landscape in places like Oulu passed without much commemoration after the war (Junilla 2012). Finland's postwar commemoration instead focused on `Heroes Cemeteries,' a memorial landscape that originated during the 1918 Civil War when `White' soldiers who had fallen to Soviet-based `Reds' were repatriated to their homes for burial (Kivimäki 2012a, 485). After 1939 roughly 600 such cemeteries were expanded or founded, including every town or parish in Finland, and they continue to be the focus of memorial ceremonies into the present (Tepora 2014, 177-178).

FIGURE 4 ABOUT HERE

A small stone marker in Alppila is one of the most distinctive material traces of the war on the contemporary Oulu landscape. In July, 1942 a German soldier likely erected a memorial to the 6th SS Mountain Division Nord that now sits in a traffic circle in suburban Linnanamaa.

The little monument tenaciously illuminates the area's German experience and reveals how the war remains a part of contemporary landscapes, even if such material culture passes largely without comment. Many places like Oulu have the rather mundane material reminders of war, often left to abandonment, removed without any thought to their significance, or simply preserved without any especially coordinated heritage strategy. The Waffen marker sits amongst postwar architecture and contrived green spaces that largely efface the wartime landscape, but it was moved to its present position from an adjoining corner several years ago by the city. Preservation of the monument confirms the consequence of the German partnership, but it does so rather implicitly, entrusting Finns' public memory to contextualize wartime heritage in the incongruous placement in a commonplace postwar suburb.

The Aesthetics of Urban Renewal

In 1953 the *Indianapolis Star* ran a series on the Indiana capital's slum clearance program that sounded a commonplace lament over the impact of slum life on community morality and public health. The newspaper despaired that their evocative narrative and images could not capture the experience, frustrated that the `disease and rat-infested sties and rookeries are more vile than even our reproduced photographs will reveal. … Some scenes from the slums are so revolting as to offend even the most hardened viewer' (*Indianapolis Star* 1953, 12). Such rhetoric signaled a shift in sentiments about the aesthetics of decline and an increasingly common belief that the city's fate rested on the eradication of the slum. In 1899, in contrast, traveler William Archer (1899: 27) painted a comparatively enchanting picture of the aesthetics of New York's slums, indicating that they had `a variety of contour and colour—in some aspects one might almost say a gaiety.' The slum loomed in such turn-of-the-century literature as an aesthetic and sensory abstraction, but as the 20th century progressed the urban imagination became increasingly unsettled by material decline and took a progressively resolute aim on the city's failures. Rather than rehabilitate the slums or allow the city to erode, ideologues and the state championed wholesale displacement to revive the urban core.

In 1943 economist Alvin Hansen (1943: 69) advocated the production of forward-thinking master plans for all American cities, arguing that `the large-scale replanning and

rebuilding of our towns and cities is one of the most urgent tasks of the postwar future.' Such municipal plans were often transparent booster statements if not ideological broadsides, evading various threads of xenophobia and lobbying for expanded municipal planning power in the service of fantasy landscapes. In 1958, for instance, the Indianapolis Redevelopment Commission produced a master design for the near-Westside that included an undergraduate campus alongside the Indiana University Medical Center, which had sat in the predominately African-American neighbourhood since 1903. The 1958 plan imagined a fascinating future city, fantasizing the development of a riverside marina and massive park south of the Medical Center as well as a downtown heliport, all underscoring that `those concerned with planning in Indianapolis should formulate a positive approach to civic beauty' (Metropolitan Planning Department 1958: 6). Such visions of the postwar city imagined that the removal of the impoverished and antiquated landscape would restore the city to a lost glory.

The neighbourhood surrounding the Medical Center was settled from the mid-19th century onward, and by the turn of the 20th century it and neighbouring Indiana Avenue were the heart of African-American life in Indianapolis. Migration waves at the turn of the century and once more for World War II employment swelled the population density, and strict residential segregation prevented significant African-American population movement from the predominately African-American neighbourhood. However, the University was increasingly covetous of these neighbourhoods as a blank canvas for the Medical Center's expansion, which eventually grew in the 1960s to include the establishment of the Indiana University-Purdue University, Indianapolis (IUPUI) campus.

In 1921 the Indiana University Medical Center took its first aim on its predominately African-American neighbours when it developed a plan for a convalescent park adjoining Riley Hospital, which was then under construction. African-American physician Sumner Furniss complained that the segregated hospital would not equitably serve any of the African-American residents it was removing, adding that `he did not think it wise to throw from 1500 to 2000 persons out of their homes' (*Indianapolis Star* 1921, 5).

The most extensive transformations of the neighbourhood came after World War II. Between 1945 and 1962 the Indianapolis Redevelopment Commission (1962, 4) conducted 12

projects razing 576 total acres, including two displacement projects conducted on campus. Both took years to complete: beginning in 1956, Project F adjoined the Dental School, and in 1963 it was still removing the last of 372 residents, when 90% of the properties had been acquired and 80% had been razed (Indianapolis Redevelopment Commission 1962: 6). The redevelopment commission was simultaneously razing 18 acres beside the hospital (Project D; *Indianapolis Recorder* 1956: 1), with the city's costs reimbursed by the University.

In 1959 the Federal Housing Act made universities an especially active mechanism of such transformation and displacement when the law was amended to provide federal aid for `urban renewal areas involving colleges and universities' (Hechinger 1961: E7). However, Indianapolis' city government was unwilling to turn over redevelopment to federal funding sources and external developers, so by the early 1960's the city refused nearly all federal urban renewal funding. Consequently, the landscape that became IUPUI in 1969 began to be purchased by the University as individual properties starting in about 1964. Like many postwar urban campuses ringed by existing neighbourhoods, IUPUI had no particularly consistent growth plan for their expansion into those neighbourhoods, despite developing at least 18 master plans since the 1960s (Gray 2003: 54). Ground was broken for the first three IUPUI academic buildings in September, 1968 (*Indianapolis Recorder* 1968: 1), but the university landscape took shape based on opportunistic property purchases. Through the late 1960s the University typically purchased between 10 and 20 properties each month, acquiring just over 2000 individual house lots as well as some commercial properties and churches (Gray 2003: 48).

Through the 1980s the piecemeal acquisition process gradually opened up space in modest patches rather than large tracts. When the University acquired most homes they tore the structure down immediately after the residents had been resettled (if the residents did not want to move they rented their home indefinitely from the University). The neighbourhood quickly became a checkerboard of standing structures alongside open lots in the place of former homes. Residents recognized that these vacant lots left in the wake of University and highway demolitions alike convinced successively more neighbours to move. In September 1966, for instance, the community group Homes Before Highways met with the Governor about simultaneous highway and university displacement projects and complained that `residents are

forced to move out of the property and then the weeds take over—lowering the value of other neighbourhood properties' (*Indianapolis Recorder* 1966b: 1-2).

The University's expansion came at nearly the same moment that the state was acquiring vast swaths of African-American Indianapolis for interstate arteries slicing through the centre of Indianapolis. In 1958 an Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce official told the *Saturday Evening Post* that `Our big job in Indiana today is to build enough roads to get employees from factories to their homes' (Martin 1958: 103). That position recognised Indianapolis' commitment to house its urban White labor force in post-war suburbs that were `exploding outward in all directions.' Meanwhile in the urban core one droll `city planner estimated that, at its present rate, slum clearance might be completed in 120 years' (Martin 1958, 104). As slum clearance inched forward, the suburbs remained inaccessible to nearly all African Americans into the 1970s: the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) would not extend loans to suburban neighbourhoods that included even a single African-American homeowner, so there were few housing options for wealthy or impoverished African-Americans (Jackson 1985: 208).

The path of Interstate 65 through the predominately African-American community was aired at public hearings in 1959 and 1960, and it was largely settled in 1961 (Ripple 1975, 481). Right-of-way was being acquired by 1963, but the project continued to be bitterly contested over nearly a decade of displacement and construction (*Indianapolis Recorder* 1961: 1-2; Ripple 1975: 487). By one 1967 estimate, about 4500 properties were required for the construction of Interstates 65 and 70 through the heart of Indianapolis (*Indianapolis Recorder* 1967: 1). *The Criterion* (1965: 4) characterised the highway's path as a `serpentine coil of concrete around the inner city,' calling the elevated interstate a `Chinese wall' that `would seal off the heart of the city, encourage the growth of slums along the outer edges, destroy needed recreation areas, and needlessly displace thousands of persons.'

In October, 1966 Homes Before Highways accused `the highway department and the university of browbeating homeowners in the path of the inter-loop portion of the inter-state highway system and the Westside residents whose homes occupy land wanted by the school for the expansion of its Indianapolis campus' (*Indianapolis Recorder* 1966c: 1). They threatened to bring Martin Luther King Jr. to lead a rally, arguing that they were `seeking to protect the

rights of elderly and undereducated Negroes who are, it is charged, being exploited by shady real estate dealers and fly-by-night landlords and coerced by university and highway officials' (*Indianapolis Recorder* 1966b: 1). The community advocates singled out the University, charging `that Negroes are also being coerced, especially by representatives of Indiana University, to sell their homes at prices far below what it would take to find similar dwellings at today's prices' (*Indianapolis Recorder* 1966a: 1).

The interstate's completion near the new IUPUI campus made the university especially convenient to suburban commuters, and it ensured that parking became one of the institution's most prominent engines of displacement. The initial 1958 plan of three buildings amidst the African-American neighbourhood quickly reached across hundreds of acres as a law school, administrative spaces, and a host of programmes gradually emerged, but it made nearly no concession for parking. Much of the open campus space became parking lots that were hastily graveled or paved to accommodate cars. Planners were ambitious to fill the ever-expanding open spaces with a host of new university buildings, so many of the expanses cleared around the campus were theoretically being temporarily converted to parking lots before grand university buildings rose in their place. For instance, the plans to fill the Project F space with student housing languished as the acquisition and demolition dragged on for several years and university funding was persistently delayed. The tract was converted to parking lots in the early 1960's, and it remains surface parking and a parking deck today.

Unlike some urban universities that remained firmly situated within living communities, IUPUI covered roughly 500 contiguous acres with expanses of grass between buildings. Gradually much of the existing streetscape was itself removed from the campus as well, so the razing of existing structures and streets erased nearly all of the material traces of the neighbourhood that had still clung to the area after the war. Planners were eager to build many new structures as the campus holdings mushroomed in the 1970s, so the University invested little energy in landscaping the campus. With the exception of a few pieces of public art installed as early as 1975 and irregular plantings of modest greenery, much of the space between buildings remained starkly blank awaiting possible future construction that has rarely occurred anywhere on campus. By the 1980s, the last historic structures were removed, leaving

vast swaths of asphalt parking lots and patches of grass that optimistic master planners continue to eye for campus growth.

Compelling Absence

To characterise the IUPUI campus or the Oulu suburbs as `absences' rhetorically illuminates how both landscapes are the products of demolition and ambitious planning that submerged the landscapes' histories, and in many ways they are like many other postwar landscapes. Certainly neither history has been utterly effaced in either popular imagination or even material reality. Finns, for instance, tend to have exceptionally deep understandings of the war; they generally recognise the complex heritage of co-belligerency and the legacy of the harsh postwar treaty with the Soviets; scatters of wartime landscape features and structures remain in varying conditions; and there are some conventional memorial landscapes in Finland. However, the contemporary northern Finnish landscape provides few commemorated traces of war. The Finnish experience of the war perhaps situates heritage primarily in collective imagination, rather than on everyday landscapes in communities like Oulu. Places like Oulu were home fronts, so in Finnish memory they are not always linked to the war because they were not really battlefields. Finnish wartime heritage is clearly registered in Finnish consciousness, but the everyday wartime experience is reduced to an abstract event rather than a genuine place in their midst.

IUPUI actually has erected modest historical commemorative markers around campus, new dormitories are named after community historical figures, and inevitably a phone app is being developed that will provide a walking tour of the otherwise invisible landscape. Yet that relatively conventional commemoration circumspectly negotiates the relationship between racism and the contemporary landscape. Much of the IUPUI community has an ambiguous awareness that the campus was once an African-American neighbourhood, and that recognition of an absent and displaced community elicits a persistent uneasiness that occasionally disrupts the spaces' representation as functional if not ahistorical expanses. Yet there is not an especially concrete recognition that the open lots and deteriorating buildings in the city today are the legacy of postwar transformation.

There is not particularly clear evidence that the IUPUI campus is perceived as an absence at all; rather, it is simply experienced as an asocial and ahistorical gulf in the movement between `real' places. Like many more fragments of the subterranean and destroyed 20th-century landscape, the eroding trenches in the Finnish woods and stark gulfs of the IUPUI parking lots belie compelling histories that are submerged in everyday consciousness. Yet perhaps especially compelling histories deeply embedded in our experience of everyday life might be told with counter-intuitively banal things: parking lots, eroded wartime ruins, and landscape voids may provide distinctively arresting points of historical imagination, just as the seemingly blank starting points of newly created postwar absences were often considered symbols for optimism. There may well be many different concrete mechanisms to reimagine the histories of particular landscape absences, but archaeology may provide an especially rich methodological and creative approach to invest a lost presence and a concrete history in a place that is somehow perceived as emptied.

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Figures

Figure 1: Edward Zebrowski's demolition firm razed much of Indianapolis, Indiana's historic landscape to make way for post-war construction. In 1962 Zebrowski tore down the 1876 Marion County Courthouse while the new City-County Building rose in the background (image Indiana Historical Society, W. H. Bass Photo Company Collection).

Figure 2: In 1935 Eleanor Roosevelt opened a Detroit clearance project with a ceremonial demolition at 651 Benton Street, where the Brewster Douglass homes would be built (image Virtual Motor City, Wayne State University).

Figure 3: Chimney stacks and a sole tree were all that remained in Rovaniemi on October 16, 1944 after the German withdrawal from the Northern Finnish city (image SA-kuva, Finnish Armed Forces).

Figure 4: German troops based in Oulu left this monument in 1942 (image Timo Ylimaunu).